

## CITY SLICKERS:

Houstonians are among the nation's least-educated city dwellers a new survey shows./PAGE 2A



Vol. 38 No. 51 Week of May 2-8, 2008

# HOUSTON BUSINESS JOURNAL

Strictly Houston. Strictly Business.

houston.bizjournals.com

80 Pages, 2 Sections \$2.95

## CORPORATE RELOCATION

# DNA firm tests positive for relocation to Salt Lake City

BY MARY ANN AZEVEDO  
HOUSTON BUSINESS JOURNAL

Less than one year after acquiring Houston-based DNA testing provider Identigene Inc., Sorenson Genomics LCC is relocating Identigene's laboratory from Houston to Salt Lake City.

The relocation — which will result in the loss of 40 local jobs — comes as a part of an effort by Salt Lake City-based Sorenson to consolidate laboratories.

Sorenson purchased Identigene last June for an undisclosed amount, and the firm became a Sorenson business unit.

In October, Identigene merged with another Sorenson unit, GeneTree.

Douglass Fogg, Sorenson's chief operating officer, says the relocation of Identigene to Sorenson's home base is intended to "bring together two very prominent and well-known forensic teams for singular representation in the marketplace."

Paternity and family-relatedness DNA testing will continue to be carried out under the Identigene business unit, while forensic DNA casework for Identigene's current clientele will now be done under the Sorenson Forensics name.

Identigene's core forensic scientific team will merge into the Sorenson Forensics business unit. The Houston laboratory at 5615 Kirby will close by the end of the summer.

About 10 people, or 25 percent, of Identigene's remaining 40 employees in Houston will be asked to relocate to Salt Lake City. The rest will be laid off. The 10 that are being offered a move are primarily technical staff, according to Fogg.

"They have the technical expertise to help us move forward," Fogg says.

If those employees choose not to relocate, Fogg says, the firm will have to recruit workers in order to meet demand for its services.

With the addition of 10 Identigene employees, Sorenson's total employee base would increase to 75.

In March, Identigene rolled out its Identigene DNA Paternity Test Kit for sale over-the-counter at Rite Aid drug stores. Sorenson says this is the first DNA test kit ever sold through major retail stores and represents a new marketing channel for DNA testing.

Identigene, which was the first laboratory to perform commercial paternity testing, also provides forensic DNA casework and relatedness DNA testing services.

Over the years, Identigene has gained high-profile clients such as the Houston Police Department and the "Maury Povich" and "Montel Williams" television talk shows.

The company was founded in 1993 by Caroline Caskey, who was just 26 years old at the time.

Caskey, who served as a consultant to Sorenson briefly after the acquisition, says she is disheartened to see Identigene's local lab shut down.

"I can understand the business reasons behind the decision," she says, "but it is still, of course, disappointing that the business is leaving Houston." ■



Caskey

mazevedo@bizjournals.com • 713-395-9657